

A Message from the Retiring Director

Jay D. Vogt

During the summer of 1987, I started working for the South Dakota State Historical Society, and thirty-three years later, I retired on 8 December 2020. It has been a rewarding journey. I have enjoyed my work, all of the opportunities it has given me, and the people with whom I have been associated.

Lieutenant Governor Walter D. Miller and Education and Cultural Affairs Secretary James O. Hansen were instrumental in my being considered for a new position at the State Historical Society. Society Director Fred Lillibridge had recently resigned, and former Director and State Historian Dayton Canaday had just retired. With the new Cultural Heritage Center under construction, it was an interesting period for the society. J. R. Fishburne stepped in as the new director, and I came on board as the executive assistant to the director, largely to work on budgets and special projects.

As the opening of the Cultural Heritage Center drew near, I was assigned the special project of managing fundraising for the future primary exhibition, *The South Dakota Experience*. I was privileged to work closely with First Lady Linda Mickelson, who took an active role in the fundraising. I became executive director of the South Dakota Heritage Fund (now the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation), which has grown over the years and continues to support the society and its programs. I served as its executive director until 2005.

Governor William J. Janklow appointed me State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in 1996, significantly changing the direction of my work. Moving the office from Vermillion to Pierre was a difficult and unpopular task, but it led me to learn on the job about historic preservation, which became a passion for me. An early accomplishment was establishing and implementing the Deadwood Fund matching-grant program. Active in the National Conference of State Historic Preser-



Society director Jay Vogt welcomes attendees to the society’s annual history conference in 2019.

vation Officers (NCSHPO), I served on the board as treasurer and vice president and as its president for four years as well as on the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). In addition to helping obtain meaningful federal funding increases for SHPOs, I co-chaired the Preserve America report *Improving the Preservation Program Infrastructure* in 2006, which eventually resulted in positive changes for the ACHP. I have hosted the NCSHPO Board of Directors in South Dakota twice and the Executive Committee once in order to show off our great state. In 2020, President Donald J. Trump appointed me an expert member of the ACHP, an appointment that continues even after my retirement from the State Historical Society.

In 1999, Department of Education Secretary Ray Christensen asked me to assume management responsibilities of the society as its deputy director. Four years later, Governor M. Michael Rounds appointed me director, a position I have held since that time. It has been a privilege to have worked with a dozen different exceptional office administrators and dozens of talented archaeologists, archivists, curators, editors, preservationists, various specialists, and support personnel. As director, I have written a handful of history-related articles, and in 2006, Stephen Rogers and I co-authored *Picturing the Past*, which the South Dakota Historical Society Press reprinted this year.

Even before becoming the society's director, I was also involved with the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), serving as the state awards chair, the leadership team regional chair, and on the governing council as well as several committees. My first academic interest while associated with the society was the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and in 2001, I chaired the annual meeting of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation held in Pierre. In 2010, I served as chair of the annual conference of the Mountain-Plains Museum Association held in Rapid City. Since its inception, I have been a lecturer on South Dakota history for the Leadership South Dakota program, and I have enjoyed being the master of ceremonies for the Trail of Governors unveiling programs. Hosting the State Historical Administrators Meeting (SHAM) in Pierre in December 2020 was to be my last opportunity as director to showcase our state and the capital city, but the in-person meeting was canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Over the past 119 years, just eight individuals have served as the society's director. I have been fortunate to follow Doane Robinson, Lawrence Fox, Will G. Robinson, Dayton Canaday, Fred Lillibridge, J. R. Fishburne, and Mary Edelen as director of the South Dakota State Historical Society. I cherish the institution and the staff who do so much to collect, preserve, interpret, and promote the history of the State of South Dakota and its people.

Congratulations to Benjamin Jones as the next director and to Theodore Spencer as the new State Historic Preservation Officer. I wish them both success in continuing all the excellent work of the society. Thank you.

Picture credits: All illustrations in this issue are property of the South Dakota State Historical Society except for those on the following pages: covers and pp. 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, from Scott Myers, Columbia, Mo.; pp. 289, 290, 298, 301, 303, 310, 314, from South Dakota Historic Preservation Office, Pierre; p. 295, from Museum of the South Dakota State Historical Society, Pierre.

On the covers: The Butte-Lawrence County Fairground features a two-and-one-half-story wood-frame octagonal pavilion. Inside, visitors can see the craftsmanship that went into its construction. In this issue, a book excerpt from *Picturing the Past* by Jay D. Vogt and Stephen C. Rogers with photographs by Scott Myers highlights numerous structures and sites important to South Dakota's history.

The activity that is the subject of this issue has been funded, in part, with financial assistance from the National Park Service through the South Dakota Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), a program that receives federal financial assistance from the National Park Service. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, South Dakota law SDCL 20-13, the State of South Dakota, and U.S. Department of the Interior prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, disability, ancestry, or national origin. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire more information, please write to: South Dakota Division of Human Rights, State Capitol, Pierre, SD 57501, or the Office of Equal Opportunity, National Park Service, 201 I Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Copyright of South Dakota History is the property of South Dakota State Historical Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.